DOLGELLAU RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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For the Year 1966

Medical Officer of Health

HUGH FRANCIS,
M.B., Ch.B. D.P.H.

Public Health Inspector

RONALD PUGH JONES,
C.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.

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DOLGELLAU RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DISTRICT MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH FOR THE YEAR 1966.

TO:- The Chairman and Members of the Dolgellau Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to submit the Annual Report for the year ended December 31st 1966.

The Registrar Generals estimate of the mid-year population was 6,990 (7,440 in 1965).

There was 93 live births (80 in 1965) but no stillbirths and no maternal deaths. There were 109 deaths (107 in 1965) 74 of which were from strokes and heart and circulatory disease (including coronary thrombosis). Sixteen deaths were due to cancer, the same number as in 1965.

Four new cases of tuberculosis were notified three of them due to tuberculosis of the lungs. No death was attributed to this disease.

The table below gives a comparision with the previous four years.

	1966	1965	1964	1963	1962
Population	6,990	7,440	7,760	7,740	7,720
Live Births	93	80	82	95	96
Live Births rate per 1,000 pop.	13.3	10.75	10.70	12.27	12.43
Stillbirths	Nil	2	Nil		3
Infant deaths	1	Nil	Nil		1
Maternal deaths	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil	Nil
Total Deaths	109	107	112		107
T.B. New Cases	4	6	2		6
T.B. Deaths	Nil	2	2	Nil	2
Deaths from Cancer	16	16	15		17

Below are some of the figures from the Annual report for 1916, 50 years from 1966. This was of course an unusual year but the figures may be of interest.

From The Annual Report for 1916

Population of Merioneth	40,432
Population of Dolgellau Rural District (estimated)	7,466
Number of Live Births	112
Live Birth rate per 1,000 population	13.7
Infant Mortality (No. of deaths under 1 year) 9	(80.3 per 1,000 births)

Causes of Death:

Measles	1.
Whooping Cough	1.
Influenza	2.
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	13.
Tuberculous Meningitis	1.
Other tuberculous disease	2.
Cancer, Malignant disease	13.
Organic Heart Disease	21.
Bronchitis	6.
Pneumonia (all forms)	13.
Other Respiratory diseases	5.
Nephritis and Bright's disease	11.
Congential Debility	2.=
Violence (apart from suicide)	4.
Suicide	1.
Other defined diseases	30.
Causes illdefined or unknown	1.
Total	107.

I wish to thank the Public Health Inspector, the Clerk and all the other Council officials for their help during the year.

Finally I wish to thank all the council members for their courtesy and support.

I remain your obedient servant,

HUGH FRANCIS,
District Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL STATISTICS

SECTION A.

Area of Dolgellau Rural District	-	158,942
Rateable Value	-	£175,832
Population (Registrar General's figures)	-	6,990
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	-	£632: 5: 1.
Number of inhabited houses (According to the Rate Books) at end of year	-	3009.

VITAL STATISTICS

Comparability Factors	-	
Births		1.35
Deaths		0.88

BIRTHS

	Males	Females
LIVE BIRTHS		
Total	51	42
Legitimate 89	50	39
Illegitimate 4	1	3

Live Birth Rate per 1,000 population - 13.3

1965 figures - 10.75

Illegitimate Live Births (per 1,000 population) - 0.57

STILL BIRTHS

Total .. .. nil

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 population .. .. nil

Still Birth Rate per 1,000 Total Live and Still Births nil

TOTAL BIRTHS (Live & Still)			Males	Females
Live	-	93	53	42
Still	-	Nil		

DEATHS

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR	Males	Females
Total	Nil	1
Legitimate	Nil	1
Illegitimate	Nil	Nil

Infant Mortality Rate per 1,000 Live Births - 10.75

1965 figures - Nil

Deaths of Legitimate Infants Mortality (per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births) - 11.4

Deaths of Illegitimate Infants Mortality (per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births) - Nil

DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER 4 WEEKS	Males	Females
Total	Nil	Nil
Legitimate	Nil	Nil
Illegitimate	Nil	Nil
DEATH OF INFANTS UNDER 1 WEEK OF AGE		
Total	Nil	1
Legitimate	Nil	1
Illegitimate	Nil	Nil

Neo-Natal Mortality Rate - 10.75
Early Neo1-Natal Mortality Rate - 10.73
Perinatal Mortality Rate - 10.73

MATERNAL DEATHS (including abortion) nil

MATERNAL MORTALITY (Rate per 1,000
Live Still Births nil
1965 nil

DEATHS	Total Number 109	57	52
	Rate per 1,000 population - 15.6		
	1965 figures - 14.38		

DEATHS FROM CANCER

Total No. 16

Rate per 1,000 population - 2.43
1965 figures - 2.15

DEATHS FROM TUBERCULOSIS

Total No. .. .. .. nil

Rate per 1,000 population - nil
1965 figures - 0.27

GENERAL PROVISIONS OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA

(1) Public Health Officers of the Authority
One Medical Officer of Health
One Public Health Inspector.
One Technical Assistant.

(2) Laboratory Facilities
Water analysis (chemical) carried out by the Public Analyst Chester
Bacteriological examination of water at the Public Health Laboratory Aberystwyth.Examination of milk for cleanliness, keeping quality, tuberculosis and brucellosis at the Public Health Laboratory, Conway.

(3) Ambulance Facilities

Four Ambulances stationed at Dolgellau and five drivers.
1 Sitting Case Car Full Time.

(4) Infant Welfare Clinics

Dyffryn 3rd Tuesday in the month - Horeb Chapel Vestry. Dolgellau 1st and 3rd Monday in the months - Ebeneser Chapel Vestry. Abergynolwyn last Friday in the month - Village Hall. Corris first Wednesday in the month - The Institute.

(5) Ante Natal Clinics

At Dolgellau Hospital two clinics in each calendar month.
1st and 3rd Monday.

(6) Orthopaedic Clinic

This Clinic is held at the Dolgellau Hospital on the 2nd Thursday of the month. After Care Clinic on the 4th Thursday of each month.

(7) Tuberculosis Clinic

At Dolgellau Hospital twice every calendar month.

(8) Immunisation

Immunisation Clinics are arranged by the County Medical Officer of Health, carried out at Infant Welfare Clinics and by the General Practitioners in their surgeries. Immunisation of young babies and young children also carried out by the School Medical Officer in the Primary Schools.

(9) Hospitals One at Dolgellau.

(10) Infectious Diseases Total number of Infectious diseases (other than Tuberculosis) notified during the year:- 33

Scarlet Fever	nil
Bacillary Dysentery	nil
Whooping Cough	nil
Measles	33
Infantile Paralysis	nil
Penumonia	nil

TUBERCULOSIS

				NEW CASES		
Pulmonary	- Total	5	Males	4	Females	1
Non-Pulmonary	- Total	1	Males	Nil	Females	1

TUBERCULOSIS DEATHS

Pulmonary	- Total	2	Males	2	Females	Nil
Non-Pulmonary	- Total	Nil	Males	Nil	Females	Nil

TUBERCULOSIS

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1966
IN AGE GROUPS

Age Periods	Respiratory		Non Respiratory		Respiratory		Non-Respiratory	
0	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
1								
2								
3								
5								
10								
15				1				
20								
25	1							
35								
45		1						
55								
65								
75	1							
TOTAL	2	1		1				

CAUSES OF DEATH 1966

	Males	Females
Tuberculosis Pulmonary		
Tuberculosis, other		
Syphilitic disease		
Other infective and parasitic disease		
Cancer stomach	3	
" Bronchus	1	1
" Breast		1
" Uterus		
" Other sites	6	3
Leukaemia, Aleukaemia		1
Diabetes	-	-
Vascular lesions of nervous system	10	9
Coronary disease, angina	15	7
Hypertension with heart disease	2	4
Other heart diseases	7	16
Other circulatory disease	4	
Influenza		
Pneumonia	2	2
Bronchitis	3	1
Ulcer of stomach and duodenum		
Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea		
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	
Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion		
Hyperplasia of prostrate		
Congenital malformation		
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	1	6
Motor vehicle accidents		
All other accidents	1	1
Suicide		
Other diseases of respiratory system	1	-

FOOD HYGIENE

Advise was given to food handlers generally during the year.

No. of prosecutions. NIL.

DOLGELLAU RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

Health Department,
Victoria Buildings,
DOLGELLAU.

To the Chairman and Members of the Dolgellau Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour in conjunction with Dr. Hugh Francis your Medical Officer of Health, to submit the section of the Annual Report dealing with the environmental health of the district for the year ending 31st December, 1966.

The Council can look upon the year under review with satisfaction. The house building programme continued to proceed, the long awaited sewerage schemes in Upper and Lower Corris were commenced and the refuse collection system was completely transformed. It is very encouraging to realise that the Government Working Party Report on Refuse Collection recommended several points which the Council already operate and the introduction of the Paper Sack System of refuse storage has been readily accepted and appreciated throughout the district.

Looking to the future, several vital public health requirements remain to be provided. Adequate sewerage facilities in several villages and hamlets are required and the necessity to build sutiable houses, particularly for the elderly, must still be given continued attention. There are still many houses in the district without modern amenities and although the number of grants applications again increased, at the present rate of progress it will be many years before the housing standard of the district reaches an acceptable and satisfactory level.

The area is becoming increasingly popular as a tourist centre and adequate caravan and camping sites must be provided to accommodate visitors. It is no use brushing this problem under the carpet, it is a public health issue that must be resolved and requires prompt attention by the appropriate Government Department to amend the existing innocuous legislation dealing with tents, and also a more positive approach by the Planning and Health Authorities to ensure that if people are invited and canvassed to visit this beautiful area, proper facilities are here to receive them.

In conclusion I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Council for their continued interest and support in improving the public health standards of the district. The steady progress witnessed in this report is proof that the Council fully accepts its responsibilities and when the available financial resources are taken into account it is amazing how so much progress has been possible.

I am indebted to Dr. Hugh Francis for his loyal support and advise, Mr. Llyr Jones, Technical Assitant for his loyalty and sense of duty, to Mr. B. Williams-Jones, Clerk of the Council, Mr. R. A. Roberts, Surveyor and Mr. M. T. Pritchard, Consultant Architect for their advise and close co-operation at all times. My thanks are also due to the Council's technical and administrative staff and last but by far not least, the outdoor staff, for their faithful support and assistance.

I remain, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,
Your obedient servant,

R. PUGH JONES.
Public Health Inspector.

Sanitary Insepctions of the Area

Refuse Tips	150	Disinfestation	2
Refuse Collection	230	Watercourses	7
Drainage	98	New Housing Sites	21
Public Health Act - re Housing defects	25	Housing Acts	84
Factories Act	2	Housing Acts - re Overcrowding & Housing Conditions	10
Public Conveniences	84	Improvement Grants	250
Caravan Sites	40	Food and Drugs Act	17
Camping Sites	110	Food Hygiene Regulations	84
Nuisances	20	Cemetries	2
Dangerous Structures	2	Interview with Owners and Builders etc.	200
Places of Public Entertainment	2	Management - Council Houses	440
Common Land re. Nuisances	4	Miscellaneous	80
Infectious Diseases	2	Private Water Supplies	25.

Factories Act 1937 - 1960

No. of Premises on Register	5
No. inspected re cleanliness	3
No. inspected re Sanitary Conditions	2
Defects found	-
Defects remedied	-

Ice Cream Premises

Manufacturing Premises	Nil.
Number of retailers	35.

House Improvement Schemes

Application for Discretionary Grants received during 1966	9
Application for Standard Grants received during 1966	34
Standard Grant Schemes completed	26
Discretionary Grant Schemes completed	10
Total number of Discretionary Improvement Grant Schemes completed from 1954 - 1966	83

Total sum of grants actually paid = £24,895: 19: 11d.

Total number of Standard Grant Improvement Schemes completed from 1959 - 1966	77

Total sum of grants actually paid = £10,799: 11: 0d.

PRIVATE BUILDING DEVELOPMENT

Private house building continued to increase in certain parts of the district particularly along the popular costal belt in the Fairbourne and Dyffryn areas. In many instances these houses are bought and occupied by either elderly persons entering the area to retire or by persons seeking a holiday and weekend retreat from the industrial areas of the Midlands and Merseyside.

Twenty four private dwellings were completed during the year whilst planning permission was granted for 78 houses.

CLEARANCE AND CLOSURE OF SUB-STANDARD HOUSING

It is estimated that there are approximately 120 substandard houses in the district and whereas about half this number can probably be rehabilited into suitable dwellings by major renovation and conversion, the existing problem remains and it is disappointing to report that progress in this very important field of public health during the year was very small indeed. The reasons for the lack of progress are very evident, the chief cause being the lack of new building in the areas where the problem is greatest, i.e. Corris and Aberllefenni. There is also some apparent reluctance by some dwellers to seek and accept suitable housing conditions. The Council will in the future have to give some measure of priority to rehousing tenants living in sub-standard houses and where opposition is met, tenants will have to be forced to vacate their existing houses and either accept the accommodation offered by the Council or seek alternatives themselves.

Only by strong and determined action will the problem of poor housing conditions be overcome.

No houses were made the subject of Demolition or Closing Orders during the year.

HOUSING IMPROVEMENTS:

There was only a slight increase in the number of applications received for improvement grants during the year. This is very disappointing to say the least, particularly as in many instances the houses improved are only used for week-end and holiday purposes. Every effort has been made to publicise the grants available and even though the Council are prepared to advance loans to help with schemes, the response is still below the rate I would consider satisfactory.

Following the commencement of the Corris Sewerage Scheme, it was evident at the end of the year that 1967 would be far more encouraging in sofar as house improvements is concerned.

The major part of Abergynolwyn Village was declared an Improvement Area during the year with a view to compulsorily requiring the improvement of tenanted houses.

Plans are in course of preparation to form a Housing Association to aquire and convert Dolserau Hall into 23 flats for elderly persons. The Council have resolved to give this project every support.

AQUISITION AND IMPROVEMENT OF HOUSES BY THE COUNCIL

The Council continue to pursue this policy and particular interest is shown in tenanted houses with a view to carrying out comprehensive improvement and renovation.

Number of properties aquired by the Council up to December 1966	55
Number of properties improved	30
Number of properties with improvement schemes in progress.	2
Number to be improved	23
Negotiation for purchase in progress.	15

NEW COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING

The Council continued with their house building programme during the year and at the end of 1966 46 housing units were under construction.

Houses completed during the year:-

Aberangell - 4 No. Two bedroom houses.

Housing Schemes under construction as at 31st December, 1966.

	Two Bedroom Flats	Three bedroom Houses	Two bedroom Bungalows
Llanegryn	-	4	4
Dyffryn	-	8	-
Llwyngwril	4	-	-
Bontddu	4	-	-
Aberllefenni	-	8	-
Corris	-	6	-
Brithdir	-	4	4

PUBLIC CLEANSING SERVICE.

REFUSE COLLECTION

It is pleasing to record that during the year the Council were able to undertake a major improvement in this essential public health service.

The practice of kerb-side collection of refuse was discontinued and the paper sack system of refuse storage and collection was introduced to all premises that receive a weekly collection service. This is undoubtedly a major contribution to the environmental health standard of the district and the following advantages can be claimed as a result:-

1. Hygienic storage of refuse - the householder receives a new refuse container each week.

2. A virtually dustless loading system and noise free collection.

3. Last but not least, the task is easier and cleaner for the collection staff.

Approximately 85% of the district is covered by a seven day collection frequency whilst the remainder,being mostly isolated farm dwellings, have the refuse collected at least once every three weeks.

All licensed caravan and camping sites receive a regular weekly collection of refuse during the holiday season but I am prompted to say that in some of the larger sites one collection every week is not sufficient and this is a matter which the operators and the Council will have to resolve as a matter of policy.

In addition to the regular refuse collection services, all villages receive periodical special collections when householders are encouraged to dispose of all bulky rubbish, old furniture and articles. This free service greatly assists householders and reduces the risk of illicit dumping of materials and the creation of nuisances and eyesores.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

The refuse tips at Bontddu and Rhoslefain continued to be used during the year and although the standard of tipping has improved considerably since the purchase of mechanical equipment the Council have become the victim of severe criticism in the Bontddu area due to an alleged serious nuisance emanating from the Farchynys area. Following serious representations from the petitioners to both Barmouth Urban District Council and the Council is was obvious that the standard of tipping in both sites would have to be improved andand joint talks were commenced between the two authorities with a view to remedying the complaints.

The refuse tip at Rhoslefain is rapidly nearing completion and the question of deciding on extending the existing tip or finding an alternative site will have to be resolved in the very near future.

It is to be regretted that a further year has elapsed with no progress insofar as the Incinerator project is concerned. The Council are in no way responsible for the continued delay which is due to difficulties encountered in purchasing the site by a third party.

Staff engaged on Public Cleansing:

Foreman - Duties consists of relief driver, vehicle maintenance and refuse disposal.
Drivers/Loaders - Three
Loader - One

One driver loader is engaged on the Land-Rover collection from isolated premises and "night-soil" collection.

No staffing problems were encountered during the year under review and in fact it was not found necessary to replace one refuse loader who retired at the end of 1966.

Generally, the service ran smoothly throughout the year. The introduction of the "rear door" collection of refuse was particularly successful and I am very indebted to the staff for their support and effort in carrying out a job of work, which, to say the least, is burdensome and unpleasant.

LITTER

The litter problem was again contained very satisfactorily during 1966 and the Council can feel justly satisfied that every effort is made to keep the district "litter-free."

PUBLIC CONVENIENCES

Several schemes of providing public conveniences in villages were at various stages of implementation during the year and work of erecting conveniences in Pennal was commenced during the latter part of 1966.

Proper hand washing facilities with a supply of hot water were installed in the two conveniences in Fairbourne.

The following villages are already provided with public conveniences:-

Abergynolwyn	Dinas Mawddwy	Dyffryn Ardudwy	Llanegryn
Llwyngwril	Llanfachreth	Bontddu	
Lower Corris	Fairbourne (2)	Ganllwyd	

The Council have resolved to provide conveniences in the undermentioned villages at an early date:-

Rhydymain	Talybont	Llanelltyd
Arthog	Upper Corris	Bennar Fawr, Talybont.

The Council have drawn the attention of the Merioneth Park Planning Committee to the urgent need of providing adequate toilet facilities in several popular tourist sites in the district and it is to be hoped that a positive response will be forthcoming in the near future as indeed public health hazards are being created particularly in the Cader Idris and Talyllyn areas.

The cleaning of all the public conveniences is undertaken by part time staff and on the whole this arrangement appears to be satisfactory. The recruitment and retention of suitable staff in some districts is however becoming difficult.

SEWERAGE AND SEWAGE DISPOSAL

It is pleasing to record that during the year the long awaited sewerage schemes for Upper and Lower Corris were commenced. This vital public health requirement has been the subject of deliberation and anxiety for years and it's actual completion will be a major step forward in the environmental health standard of the district.

The large comprehensive sewerage scheme in the Dyffryn/Talybont area continued to proceed and again the provision of adequate sewerage in this area will bring about a considerable public health improvement by the abolition of a number of septic tanks and cesspools and the satisfactory drainage of the large caravan sites.

Although the sewerage arrangements in Fairbourne appeared to be more satisfactory following carrying out of substantial emergency works the need for a complete and efficient system in this popular seaside resort becomes more acute annually, particularly as private housing development continues to increase.

It is also disapointing to note that the Pennal Sewerage Scheme is no further ahead and it is to be hoped that progress will be forthcoming with the least possible delay.

The Council have the following sewerage schemes in various stages of implementation at the end of 1966:-

Talybont/Dyffryn Scheme	-	In progress
Upper & Lower Corris	-	In progress
Aberllefenni	-	To commence 1967
Brithdir	-	To commence early 1968
Bontddu Sewerage Disposal	-	To commence 1968
Friog/Fairbourne/Arthog Comprehensive Scheme	-	Preliminary design stage
Pennal	-	Design stage.

CARAVAN AND CAMPING SITES

Number of Licensed Caravan Sites - 34
Estimated total number of Caravans on Licensed Sites - 2,150

Inspections of the caravan sites during the holiday season revealed that there were no serious breaches of the site license conditions and where contraventions were found, verbal or written notices were complied with.

No legal proceedings were instituted during the year.

It was again very evident during the holiday season that there is an urgent need for caravan tourist sites in the area. Indiscriminate parking of caravans in fields and lay-byes must give rise to public health hazards and in my view the Public Health and Planning Authorities are duty bound to ensure that adequate sites with the necessary amenities are available.

TENTED CAMPING SITES

The summer of 1966 was a repeat of previous seasons, with unauthorised camping sites sprouting more or less throughout the district. In many instances little or no regard is given to basic public health requirements but due to the lack of effective legislation to deal with the problem, the health authority can only look on the situation powerless and fustrated. It is high time that legislation is introduced to remedy what is becoming a serious health and amenity problem.

SAMPLING AND ANALYSIS OF WATER

Public Supplies:

The Council's Surveyor arranged for regular sampling of all the public water supplies. The results are as follows:-

No. of Samples	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
57	42	15

Private Water Supplies:

Due to Hill Farming and House Improvement schemes in particular, many dwellings situated outside the limits of the public water supplies have been provided with satisfactory private water supplies derived mainly from land springs. Proposed sources of supplies are samples for bacteriological analysis and advise is given on sources and protection against pollution. The new Standard Grant provisions assist and encourage houseowners to provide a satisfactory and wholesome supply of water to dwellings already lacking such a facility. Where isolated and sub-standard dwellings are brought into re-use, mainly as holiday homes, an approved piped supply of wholesome water is insisted upon before occupation is permitted.

Water analysis results were as follows:-

No. of Samples Taken	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
9	5	4

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT 1955

FOOD HYGIENE (GENERAL) REGULATIONS 1960

Food premises are visited periodically and on the whole such establishments are found to be satisfactory.

The main criticism is bad food handling practice which more often than not is purely lack of thought. The general public can play a big part in this direction by refusing to purchase food in premises where food handlers persist in careless and thoughtless practices.

There were no legal proceedings instituted during the year for contravention of the Regulations.

SHOPS, OFFICES AND TAILWAY PREMISES ACT 1963

A number of premises registered under the above Act were inspected during the year. No special difficulties have been encountered and with regular re-visits it is anticipated that all premises will maintain a satisfactory standard.

ANNUAL REPORT ON RATS AND MICE

YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER, 1966

	Type of Property	
	Non Agricultural	Agricultural
Properties inspected following notification	9	5
Number infested by		
(1) Rats	5	5
(2) Mice	4	-
Total number of properties inspected for rats and mice for reason other than notification	1011	223
Number infested by (1) Rats	19	74
(2) Mice	39	2